I. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, 1 DECEMBER 1997

On 1 December 1997, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was observed at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna, as well as in several other cities, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977.

All States Members of the United Nations, specialized agencies and observers were invited to attend the solemn meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

At that meeting statements were made by Ibra Deguène Ka (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee; Hennadiy Udovenko (Ukraine), President of the General Assembly; the Secretary-General; and Fernando Berrocal Soto (Costa Rica), President of the Security Council for the month of December 1997.

The Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations read out a message from Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Also, Herman Leonard de Silva (Sri Lanka) made a statement as Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

In addition, Adelfo Garcia, the representative of Colombia, read out a message from Ernesto Samper, President of Colombia, in his capacity as Chairman of the Eleventh Conference of the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Makarim Wibisono, representative of Indonesia, read out a message from Ali Alatas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, in his capacity as Chairman of the Twenty-fourth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

Machivenyika Tobias Mapuranga, representative of Zimbabwe, read out a message from Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe, in his capacity as Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. Said Kamal, Under-Secretary-General for Palestine Affairs of the League of Arab States, read out a message from Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States. A further statement was made by Don Betz, Chairman of the International Coordinating Committee for Non-Governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine.

Concluding statements were made by Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the Political Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Chairman of the Committee.

The text of the statements and messages in connection with the Day of Solidarity will be included in a special bulletin to be published by the Division for Palestinian Rights.

A cultural exhibit entitled "At Home in Palestine", featuring Palestinian arts, handicrafts and products organized by the Palestine Red Crescent Society, the Committee for Information Service of the Palestinian Authority and the Dar Al-Fan (House of Art), was on display in the Public Lobby of the United Nations Secretariat Building from 1 to 7 December 1997. The exhibit was sponsored by the Committee in cooperation with the Palestine Observer Mission to the United Nations. At the opening, on 1 December 1997, the Chairman of the Committee made a statement, followed by a statement by Farouk Kaddoumi of Palestine.

At the United Nations Offices in Geneva, a solemn meeting was held on 1 December. The meeting was chaired by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, who opened the meeting by reading the statement of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan. The Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations at Geneva, Mr. Michael Bartolo, spoke on behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. At the United Nations Office in Vienna, a solemn meeting was also held on 1 December. Mr. Mohamed El Fadhel Khalil (Tunisia) opened the meeting on behalf of the Committee. Mr. Pino Arlacchi, Director-General, delivered the message of the Secretary-General.

II. DEBATE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE OPENS IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On 1 December 1997, the debate on the question of Palestine began in the General Assembly. In accordance with past practice, the item was taken up in the plenary and was introduced by the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The Rapporteur of the Committee introduced the annual report (A/52/35). The full text of both statements is presented below:

Statement of the Chairman

Mr. Ka (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (*interpretation from French*): It is a genuine pleasure for me once again to address the General Assembly in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and it is also an honour for me to open the annual debate on the agenda item entitled Question of Palestine.

I should like first of all to congratulate you once again, Sir, on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly and to recall that you were an active member of our own Committee. Your boundless energy, your diplomatic skills and your devotion to the objectives of the United Nations are well known and greatly appreciated by all. I am convinced that you will guide our work in the most productive manner.

Not so long ago, some delegations felt that the mandate of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People had been made redundant by the positive evolution of the peace process and that the Committee and other United Nations bodies active on this issue should be phased out, together with the Secretariat units servicing them. I think that those delegations quickly changed their minds in the light of the impasse in the peace process.

While welcoming the achievements in the negotiations since September 1993 with the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements and the subsequent developments, in particular the Interim Agreement of 1995, the Committee cautioned that these were but steps towards the full achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Because the situation on the ground remained fragile and littered with pitfalls, the Committee reminded the international community that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility on the question of Palestine until the question has been resolved in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy.

As the organ established by the General Assembly to deal with the question of Palestine, the Committee has continued to endeavour to play an essential role during the transitional period

envisaged by the accords and will do so until the desired solution had been reached. In the context of the international community's efforts to find a solution, we would have been the first to rejoice at positive developments in the peace process, a process that had aroused such high hopes the world over.

But today the Committee is deeply saddened and disconcerted by the increasing difficulties and obstacles that have made the peace process fragile. By resuming its policy of constructing settlements and confiscating land; by increasingly encroaching upon occupied East Jerusalem and denying residency rights to Palestinians born and living there; by carrying out prolonged and punishing blockades of the areas under Palestinian Authority control; by postponing withdrawal from much of the West Bank; by its indifferent acceptance of harassment by armed settlers against innocent, unarmed Arab civilians; by carrying out punitive expeditions and acts of intimidation against Palestinian populations; by forbidding Palestinian families to be reunited: in all these ways, the Israeli Government has created a situation of deepening despair and tension in the occupied Palestinian territory. The behaviour of the occupying Power has thus increasingly undermined the confidence and lowered the expectations brought about in 1993 by the peace process.

The Committee has repeatedly condemned acts of violence by extremists, which have resulted in tragic loss of life among innocent civilians on both sides. Such reprehensible acts are the work of the enemies of peace. They sow fear and mistrust and prevent progress towards the reconciliation that is essential to the achievement of a lasting, peaceful political solution between the parties.

The retaliatory actions taken by the Israeli Government against the entire Palestinian population can never be justified or accepted by the international community as necessary security measures. Indeed, by strangling the economy and impeding normal movement between Gaza and the West Bank, they compound feelings of insecurity and tension and cause regrettable delays in the peace process. They can only fuel further instability, violence and insecurity.

Over the past year, as Chairman of the Committee, I have repeatedly expressed these concerns to the Security Council, as well as to the General Assembly at its resumed fifty-first session and at its tenth emergency special session. I have urged these organs, and the international community as a whole, to intensify their efforts and initiatives to save and reinvigorate the peace process and to ensure respect for the provisions of international law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem.

I have also actively participated on behalf of the Committee in the frequent deliberations on Palestine held by intergovernmental bodies, notably the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization of African Unity. Their resolutions and decisions, as well as those of other intergovernmental and United Nations bodies, testify to their keen interest and deep concern with respect to the disturbing situation in Palestine. They reflect a determination to act collectively to break the dangerous impasse in which the peace process is trapped. The community of peace-loving nations simply wishes through its messages to make the parties understand that only peace can bring security, and that only security can preserve peace.

In carrying out its mandate, the Committee has also done everything possible to make an effective and constructive contribution through the programme of seminars and meetings of non-governmental organizations organized under its auspices. Those meetings have provided a forum for frank and useful discussion and for the adoption of action-oriented strategies with the participation of Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, experts, leaders, eminent individuals and Palestinian and Israeli decision makers.

We also attach particular importance to the programme of studies and publications, and other activities of the Secretariat's Division for Palestinian Rights, including the training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority and the United Nations electronic information system on the question of Palestine.

When he introduces the Committee report, I am sure that the Rapporteur will provide the necessary details about these various activities.

For my part, I would like to take this opportunity to express the Committee's gratitude and appreciation for the generous support of the Governments of Indonesia and of Jordan, which provided venues and facilities for the holding of an Asian seminar and non-governmental organization symposium and for a seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people, respectively.

We are also deeply grateful to the Government of Belgium for offering facilities for a conference next February to be organized in cooperation with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, and to the Government of Chile for having agreed to the holding of the next Latin American and Caribbean seminar and non-governmental organization symposium.

The General Assembly is aware that the Republic of South Africa has requested to become a full member of the Committee and that Namibia will soon do the same. We try to encourage greater participation by all States in the Committee's activities, and other Governments have expressed an interest. We also note with appreciation the increasingly positive votes on many resolutions relating to the question of Palestine, as seen in the overwhelming majorities in favour of the resolutions adopted at the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly. This growing support sends a clear message and is a source of hope and reassurance, encouraging all the members of the Committee to intensify our efforts even further in the coming year.

I believe that the events of the past year have shown, without the shadow of a doubt, the great dangers of the policies of expansion and exclusion pursued by the present Israeli leadership. These policies run directly counter to the historical trend towards the resolution of conflicts in the world through dialogue and cooperation, confidence-building measures and negotiation that should be at the basis of the dynamic of the peace process.

By seeking to impose an unjust peace denying the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, these policies imperil the achievements of peace and the fragile network of economic, political and social relationships that was beginning to be established in Palestine. A rare historic opportunity is being squandered, with no other viable solution being proposed.

It is time, today more than ever before, to increase initiatives in order to save the peace process and spare the peoples of the region the spectre of war and acts of violence.

We earnestly hope that this debate, like the recent debate at the tenth emergency special session, will show the way towards peace by once again reminding the Israeli leaders of their country's obligations as a State party to the Fourth Geneva Convention and as a Member State of the United Nations. We must also reaffirm the position clearly adopted by the entire international community in favour of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and of a peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which remains at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In order to achieve this just and lasting settlement, rooted in international legitimacy, the two parties must make an enormous effort and understand that only peace, mutual confidence and coexistence, with respect for the rights and dignity of all, can put an end to all the bloodshed, to so much sustained hatred and pointless destruction.

Statement by the Rapporteur

Mr. Saliba (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People: It is an honour for me, in my capacity as Rapporteur, having assumed my new functions earlier this year, to present to the General Assembly for the first time the annual report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

During the past year the Committee continued to do its utmost to implement the mandate given to it by the General Assembly. The report covers the new developments concerning the question of Palestine, the peace process and the activities of the Committee since last year's report.

The introduction to the report is contained in chapter I, which indicates briefly the Committee's objectives and concerns in the light of the evolving situation. Chapters II and III are procedural; they summarize the respective mandates of the Committee, the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information and give information on the Committee's organization of work.

Chapter IV covers developments in the situation relating to the question of Palestine, as monitored by the Committee in the course of the year. While noting some progress with regard to the peace process early in the year, particularly the signing of the Protocol on Hebron and the release of some Palestinian detainees, the Committee was increasingly concerned at the ongoing deterioration of the situation and the intensification of violence and tension on the ground. The Committee expressed its great concern that the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations faced serious setbacks due to the position of the Government of Israel on the various aspects of the peace process. In particular, the Committee was alarmed by the position of the Government of Israel on the question of Jerusalem, especially the establishment of a new settlement in Jebel Abu Ghneim, the growing threat to Palestinian residency rights in Jerusalem, the continued expansion of settlements in general, confiscation of Arab land, demolition of Palestinian houses and the prolonged closure of the Palestinian territory.

The main body of the report is in chapter V, which gives an account of the action taken by the Committee in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 51/23 and 51/24. The Committee Chairman participated in international efforts in opposition to the new Israeli settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim by drawing the attention of the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council thereto and by actively representing the Committee in all the relevant meetings of the Security Council, the resumed fifty-first session and the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly.

The Committee also sought to remind the international community of the fact that the occupation still continues, by organizing a special commemorative meeting on the thirtieth anniversary of the war of June 1967. The Chairman also raised the Committee's concerns in the relevant international ministerial meetings and summits at which he represented the Committee. The report also notes similar concerns expressed by various United Nations and intergovernmental bodies in their resolutions and communiqués relating to the question of Palestine, the list of which is included in the report.

Chapter V also provides information on the Committee's efforts to make its work more relevant and useful in the light of the new developments on the ground, and to involve additional countries in its work. The Committee continued to endeavour to sharpen the focus of its seminars and non-governmental organization meetings in the various regions, to make them more action-oriented, and to reach out to broader non-governmental organization constituencies. The meetings held during 1997 included the annual meeting of consultations with the representatives of non-governmental organization coordinating committees, held in New York in February; an Asian seminar and non-governmental organization symposium on the question of Palestine, held in Jakarta, in May; the

annual seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people, held in Amman, Jordan, also in May; the annual North American Symposium of Non-Governmental Organizations, held in New York in June; and the annual European Symposium of Non-Governmental Organizations and the International Meeting of Non-Governmental Organizations, held in Geneva in August. I would like to take this opportunity to join our Chairman in expressing our profound thanks to the Governments of Indonesia and of Jordan for providing the venue and facilitating the holding of these important events.

The chapter also provides information on the activities of the Division for Palestinian Rights in the field of research and publications, including the recent issuance of a study on the status of Jerusalem, as well as on the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL). It also provides information on a training programme on the workings of the United Nations for staff of the Palestinian Authority, initiated in 1996, which is being continued this year. Finally, the chapter describes the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which took place in New York as well as at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna and in other cities.

Chapter VI covers the work of the Department of Public Information in accordance with General Assembly resolution 51/25, including the publications and audio-visual activities of the Department, and other activities carried out by the Department. The seventh and last chapter contains the recommendations of the Committee to the General Assembly. Noting the various anniversaries of the history of dispossession of the Palestinian people commemorated in 1997, the Committee urges the international community to redouble its efforts in support of their inalienable rights, which are the key to a just and lasting peace. The Committee also considers it essential for the international community to intensify its efforts in support of the historic process of reconciliation between the two sides and for the effective implementation of the agreements reached since 1993.

At the same time, the Committee expresses its greatest concern at the growing stalemate in the peace process and the exacerbation of tension and violence on the ground. It calls for an end to the prolonged closure of the occupied territory and other forms of collective punishment, in the interest of restoring mutual confidence and promoting peace.

The Committee expresses special concern regarding actions taken by Israel in occupied East Jerusalem and the intensification of settlement construction, as they jeopardize prospects for a just peace and for the achievement of the Palestinian right to self-determination. With regard particularly to Israel's decision to build a new settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim in spite of international opposition, the Committee expresses its full support for the recommendations made by the General Assembly at its tenth emergency special session, and for the convening of a conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Committee also states that it will remain engaged in the follow-up to these recommendations in order to promote the necessary action.

The Committee also calls for additional efforts by the international community to restore momentum to the Middle East peace process and reaffirms that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility with respect to the question of Palestine until a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement is reached, based on established and accepted principles. The Committee reiterates its view that its own role will continue to be useful and necessary until a satisfactory final settlement is reached and invites the General Assembly once again to recognize the importance of its role and to reconfirm its mandate with overwhelming support.

Finally, the Committee expresses its great appreciation to those States which have supported its work; it stresses the continued importance and usefulness of its programme of seminars and non-

governmental organization meetings; and it calls for the greatest possible participation of States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the meetings organized under its auspices, as such meetings provide useful and unique forums for discussion of all relevant issues and for the development of joint activities by all those concerned.

The Committee also emphasizes the essential contribution of the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat as a focal point for collection and dissemination of information on all issues related to the question of Palestine and requests it to continue its programme of publications and studies and to develop further the United Nations computer-based information system on the question of Palestine. It also requests the continuation of the training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority.

Finally, the Committee expresses its intention to continue to strive to achieve maximum effectiveness in the implementation of its mandate and to adjust its work programme in the light of developments, in order to continue to contribute, to the extent possible, to the realization of the common United Nations objective of achieving a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine.

I trust that this report will be of assistance to the General Assembly in facilitating its deliberations on this important issue.

III. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS FOUR RESOLUTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

The General Assembly considered agenda item 36, entitled "Question of Palestine", at three plenary meetings, held on 1, 2 and 9 December 1997. Submitted under the agenda item were the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/52/35); the report of the Secretary-General (A/52/581); and a letter from the Chairman of the Committee (A/52/571) and a letter from Namibia (A/52/704). For an excerpt from the Committee report, see the October/November 1997 issue of this Bulletin. For the text of two statements introducing the debate on the item, see above. For the verbatim records of the plenary consideration of the item, see A/52/PV.58, 59 and 68.

The statement of Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee, introducing draft resolutions A/52/L.49-51 is reproduced below, based on the verbatim record contained in document A/52/PV.68. On 9 December, the General Assembly agreed, without a vote, to the enlargement of the membership of the Committee and decided to appoint South Africa and Namibia as members.

The four resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December under the item are also reproduced below, with the indication of the vote. Voting details will be given in a document to be issued by the Division for Palestinian Rights with the symbol A/AC.183/L.2/Add.18.

Statement of the Committee Rapporteur, on behalf of the Chairman:

Mr. Saliba (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People: On behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, who is not in New York at present, I have the honour to introduce three draft resolutions under agenda item 36, "Question of Palestine": draft resolution A/52/L.49, entitled "Committee on the Exercise of

the Palestinian People"; draft resolution A/52/L.50, entitled "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat"; and draft resolution A/52/L.51, entitled "Special information programme on the question of Palestine". I would also like to announce that Bahrain and the Comoros have joined as sponsors of those three draft resolutions.

Draft resolutions A/52/L.49, A/52/L.50 and A/52/L.51 respectively renew the mandates of the Committee, the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information to continue their endeavours and programmes in their respective areas of activity. The mandates of those entities have been consistently reconfirmed by the General Assembly by overwhelming majority votes. This is clear testimony to the fact that the Assembly considers them vital to the overall efforts of our Organization to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine. Also, this year again, many delegations in their statements in plenary meetings reiterated the clear position of the entire international community that the United Nations should continue to have a permanent responsibility towards the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all its aspects.

The sponsors are submitting these three draft resolutions driven by a strong desire that the Organization should make a further concrete and constructive contribution to the multiplicity of efforts, bilateral, multilateral or undertaken by individuals or by Governments, aimed at bringing about a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine.

As members of the Assembly can see, the texts of the three draft resolutions have been updated as necessary to reflect the changes in the work programmes of the Committee and of the Secretariat's Division for Palestinian Rights and Department of Public Information. The corresponding financial provision has been made in the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

Allow me, on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to express profound gratitude to all those Members who have through the years supported the work done by the Committee, the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information in implementation of their important mandates. I would also like to call upon all delegations present here to express their support for and solidarity with the Palestinian people by voting in favour of the draft resolutions before the Assembly.

Resolutions on the question of Palestine

52/49. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, 3375 (XXX) and 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, 31/20 of 24 November 1976, 32/40 A of 2 December 1977, 33/28 A and B of 7 December 1978, 34/65 A of 29 November 1979 and 34/65 C of 12 December 1979, ES-7/2 of 29 July 1980, 35/169 A and C of 15 December 1980, 36/120 A and C of 10 December 1981, ES-7/4 of 28 April 1982, 37/86 A of 10 December 1982, 38/58 A of 13 December 1983, 39/49 A of 11 December 1984, 40/96 A of 12 December 1985, 41/43 A of 2 December 1986, 42/66 A of 2 December 1987, 43/175 A of 15 December 1988, 44/41 A of 6 December 1989, 45/67 A of 6 December 1990, 46/74 A of 11 December 1991, 47/64 A of 11 December 1992, 48/158 A of 20 December 1993, 49/62 A of 14 December 1994, 50/84 A of 15 December 1995 and 51/23 of 4 December 1996,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,1/

1/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/52/35).

Recalling the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, including its Annexes and Agreed Minutes, by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993,2/ as well as the subsequent implementation agreements, in particular the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,3/

Reaffirming that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility with respect to the question of Palestine until the question is resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its efforts in performing the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly;

2. *Considers* that the Committee can continue to make a valuable and positive contribution to international efforts to promote the effective implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements and to mobilize international support for and assistance to the Palestinian people during the transitional period;

3. *Endorses* the recommendations of the Committee contained in chapter VII of its report;

4. *Requests* the Committee to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly or the Security Council, as appropriate;

5. *Authorizes* the Committee to continue to exert all efforts to promote the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, to make such adjustments in its approved programme of work as it may consider appropriate and necessary in the light of developments, to give special emphasis to the need to mobilize support and assistance for the Palestinian people and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session and thereafter;

6. *Requests* the Committee to continue to extend its cooperation to non-governmental organizations in their contribution towards heightening international awareness of the facts relating to the question of Palestine and promoting support and assistance to meet the needs of the Palestinian people and to take the necessary steps to involve additional non-governmental organizations in its work;

7. *Requests* the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, established under General Assembly resolution 194 (III), and other United Nations bodies associated with the question of Palestine to continue to cooperate fully with the Committee and to make available to it, at its request, the relevant information and documentation which they have at their disposal;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to circulate the report of the Committee to all the competent bodies of the United Nations, and urges them to take the necessary action, as appropriate;

9. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Committee with all the necessary facilities for the performance of its tasks.

Adopted on 9 December 1997
by 115 votes to 2,
with 45 abstentions

2/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex. For the final text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

3/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex. For the final text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

52/50. Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,1/

Taking note in particular of the relevant information contained in chapter V.B of that report,

Recalling its resolutions 32/40 B of 2 December 1977, 33/28 C of 7 December 1978, 34/65 D of 12 December 1979, 35/169 D of 15 December 1980, 36/120 B of 10 December 1981, 37/86 B of 10 December 1982, 38/58 B of 13 December 1983, 39/49 B of 11 December 1984, 40/96 B of 12 December 1985, 41/43 B of 2 December 1986, 42/66 B of 2 December 1987, 43/175 B of 15 December 1988, 44/41 B of 6 December 1989, 45/67 B of 6 December 1990, 46/74 B of 11 December 1991, 47/64 B of 11 December 1992, 48/158 B of 20 December 1993, 49/62 B of 14 December 1994, 50/84 B of 15 December 1995 and 51/24 of 4 December 1996,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the action taken by the Secretary-General in compliance with its resolution 51/24;

2. *Considers* that the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat continues to make a useful and constructive contribution through the organization of seminars and meetings of non-governmental organizations, as well as through its research and monitoring activities, the preparation of studies and publications and the collection and dissemination of information in printed and electronic form on all issues pertaining to the question of Palestine;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Division with the necessary resources, including for the further development of the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine,2/ and to ensure that it continues to discharge the tasks detailed in paragraph 1 of resolution 32/40 B, paragraph 2 (*b*) of resolution 34/65 D, paragraph 3 of resolution 36/120 B, paragraph 3 of resolution 38/58 B, paragraph 3 of resolution 40/96 B, paragraph 2 of resolution 42/66 B, paragraph 2 of resolution 44/41 B, paragraph 2 of resolution 46/74 B, paragraph 2 of resolution 48/158 B, paragraph 3 of resolution 49/62 B, paragraph 3 of resolution 50/84 B and paragraph 3 of resolution 51/24, in consultation with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and under its guidance;

4. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the continued cooperation of the Office of Communications and Public Information and other units of the Secretariat in enabling the Division to perform its tasks and in covering adequately the various aspects of the question of Palestine;

5. *Invites* all Governments and organizations to lend their cooperation to the Committee and the Division in the performance of their tasks;

6. *Notes with appreciation* the action taken by Member States to observe annually on 29 November the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, requests them to continue to give the widest possible publicity to the observance, and requests the Committee to continue to organize, as part of the observance of the Day of Solidarity, an annual exhibit on Palestinian rights in cooperation with the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations.

Adopted on 9 December 1997
by 113 votes to 2,
with 47 abstentions

1/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/52/35).

2/ Ibid., paras. 101 and 102.

52/51. Special information programme on the question of Palestine

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,1/

Taking note in particular of the information contained in chapter VI of that report,

Recalling its resolution 51/25 of 4 December 1996,

Convinced that the worldwide dissemination of accurate and comprehensive information and the role of non-governmental organizations and institutions remain of vital importance in heightening awareness of and support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people,

Aware of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements signed by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993,2/ and of the subsequent implementation agreements, in particular the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,3/ and their positive implications,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the action taken by the Office of Communications and Public Information of the Secretariat in compliance with resolution 51/25;

2. *Considers* that the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Office is very useful in raising the awareness of the international community concerning the complexities of the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East in general, including the achievements of the peace process, and that the programme is contributing effectively to an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and supportive of the peace process;

3. *Requests* the Office, in full cooperation and coordination with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to continue, with the necessary flexibility as may be required by developments affecting the question of Palestine, its special information programme for the biennium 1998-1999, with particular emphasis on public opinion in Europe and North America and, in particular:

(*a*) To disseminate information on all the activities of the United Nations system relating to the question of Palestine, including reports on the work carried out by the relevant United Nations organizations;

(*b*) To continue to issue and update publications on the various aspects of the question of Palestine in all fields, including materials concerning the recent developments in that regard and, in particular, the prospects for peace;

(*c*) To expand its collection of audiovisual material on the question of Palestine and to continue the production of such material;

(*d*) To organize and promote fact-finding news missions for journalists to the area, including

---

1/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/52/35).

2/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex. For the final text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

3/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex. For the final text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

the territories under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority and the occupied territories;

(*e*) To organize international, regional and national seminars or encounters for journalists;

(*f*) To continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of media development, in particular to strengthen the training programme for Palestinian broadcasters and journalists initiated in 1995.

Adopted on 9 December 1997
by 158 votes to 2,
with 4 abstentions

52/52. Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine

The General Assembly,

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including resolutions adopted at the tenth emergency special session,

Recalling also the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973,

Aware that 1997 marks fifty years since the adoption of resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and thirty years since the occupation of Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General 1/ submitted pursuant to the request made in its resolution 51/26 of 4 December 1996,

Convinced that achieving a final and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, is imperative for the attainment of a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East,

Aware that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples is among the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Affirming the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war,

Affirming also the illegality of the Israeli settlements in the territory occupied since 1967 and of Israeli actions aimed at changing the status of Jerusalem,

Affirming once again the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders,

Recalling the mutual recognition between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, and the signing by the two parties of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993,2/ as well as the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,3/

Recalling also the withdrawal of the Israeli army, which took place in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area in 1995 in accordance with the

---

1/ A/52/581-S/1997/866. For the final text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1997*, document S/1997/866.

2/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex. For the final text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

3/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex. For the final text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

agreements reached by the parties, and the initiation of the Palestinian Authority in those areas, as well as the beginning of the redeployment of the Israeli army in the rest of the West Bank in 1996,

Noting with satisfaction the successful holding of the first Palestinian general elections,

Noting with appreciation the work of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and its positive contribution,

Welcoming the convening of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, as well as all follow-up meetings and the international mechanisms established to provide assistance to the Palestinian people,

Concerned about the serious difficulties facing the Middle East peace process, including the lack of implementation of the agreements reached and the deterioration of the socio-economic conditions of the Palestinian people as a result of the Israeli positions and measures,

1. *Reaffirms* the necessity of achieving a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in all its aspects;

2. *Expresses its full support* for the ongoing peace process which began in Madrid and the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 1993,2/ as well as the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip of 1995,3/ and expresses the hope that the process will lead to the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East;

3. *Stresses* the necessity for commitment to the principle of land for peace and the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which form the basis of the Middle East peace process, and the need for the immediate and scrupulous implementation of the agreements reached between the parties, including the redeployment of the Israeli forces from the West Bank and the commencement of the negotiations on the final settlement;

4. *Calls upon* the concerned parties, the co-sponsors of the peace process and other interested parties, as well as the entire international community to exert all the necessary efforts and initiatives to bring the peace process back on track and to ensure its continuity and success;

5. *Stresses* the need for:

(*a*) The realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination;

(*b*) The withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967;

6. *Also stresses* the need for resolving the problem of the Palestine refugees in conformity with its resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948;

7. *Urges* Member States to expedite the provision of economic and technical assistance to the Palestinian people during this critical period;

8. *Emphasizes* the importance for the United Nations to play a more active and expanded role in the current peace process and in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties concerned and, in consultation with the Security Council, for the promotion of peace in the region and to submit progress reports on developments in this matter.

Adopted on 9 December 1997
by 115 votes to 2,
with 3 abstentions

IV. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS TWO RESOLUTIONS ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The General Assembly considered agenda item 37, entitled "The situation in the Middle East", at three plenary meetings, held on 3 and 9 December 1997. Under the item, the Secretary-General issued two brief reports on the implementation of the previous session's resolutions on Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan containing information received from Member States (A/52/467), and on developments during the last year of the Middle East peace process (A/52/581), containing replies from the Security Council and parties concerned as well as his observations. For the verbatim record of the meetings, see documents A/52/PV.60, 61 and 68.

On 9 December 1997, the General Assembly adopted two resolutions, reproduced below with an indication of the vote. Voting details will be given in a document to be issued by the Division for Palestinian Rights with the symbol A/AC.183/L.2/Add.18.

A draft resolution entitled "Full participation of Palestine to the work of the United Nations" (A/52/L.53/Rev.1) was withdrawn after the representative of Egypt requested, on behalf of the sponsors, that the draft resolution not be put to a vote at the present time. The European Union had also submitted an amendment (A/52/L.59).

52/53. Jerusalem

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 36/120 E of 10 December 1981, 37/123 C of 16 December 1982, 38/180 C of 19 December 1983, 39/146 C of 14 December 1984, 40/168 C of 16 December 1985, 41/162 C of 4 December 1986, 42/209 D of 11 December 1987, 43/54 C of 6 December 1988, 44/40 C of 4 December 1989, 45/83 C of 13 December 1990, 46/82 B of 16 December 1991, 47/63 B of 11 December 1992, 48/59 A of 14 December 1993, 49/87 A of 16 December 1994, 50/22 A of 4 December 1995 and 51/27 of 4 December 1996, in which it determined that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purported to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, in particular the so-called "Basic Law" on Jerusalem and the proclamation of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, were null and void and must be rescinded forthwith,

Recalling also Security Council resolution 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980, in which the Council, *inter alia*, decided not to recognize the "Basic Law" and called upon those States which had established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,1/

1. *Determines* that the decision of Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the Holy City of Jerusalem is illegal and therefore null and void and has no validity whatsoever;

2. *Deplores* the transfer by some States of their diplomatic missions to Jerusalem in violation of Security Council resolution 478 (1980) and their refusal to comply with the provisions of that resolution;

3. *Calls once more upon* those States to abide by the provisions of the relevant United Nations resolutions, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations;

1/ A/52/467.

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 9 December 1997
by 148 votes to 1,
with 9 abstentions

52/54. The situation in the Middle East: the Syrian Golan

The General Assembly,

Having considered the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East",

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,1/

Recalling Security Council resolution 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming once more the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,2/ to the occupied Syrian Golan,

Deeply concerned that Israel has not withdrawn from the Syrian Golan, which has been under occupation since 1967, contrary to the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions,

Stressing the illegality of the Israeli settlement construction and activities in the occupied Syrian Golan since 1967,

Noting with satisfaction the convening at Madrid on 30 October 1991 of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978 and the formula of land for peace,

Expressing grave concern over the halt in the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, and expressing the hope that peace talks will soon resume from the point they had reached,

1. *Declares* that Israel has failed so far to comply with Security Council resolution 497 (1981);

2. *Declares also* that the Israeli decision of 14 December 1981 to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and has no validity whatsoever, as confirmed by the Security Council in its resolution 497 (1981), and calls upon Israel to rescind it;

3. *Reaffirms its determination* that all relevant provisions of the Regulations annexed to the Hague Convention of 19073/, and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,2 continue to apply to the Syrian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, and calls upon the parties thereto to respect and ensure respect for their obligations under those instruments in all circumstances;

4. *Determines once more* that the continued occupation of the Syrian Golan and its de facto annexation constitute a stumbling block in the way

---

1/ A/52/467.

2/ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

3/ See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

of achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region;

5. *Calls upon* Israel to resume the talks on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and to respect the commitments and undertakings reached during the previous talks;

6. *Demands once more* that Israel withdraw from all the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions;

7. *Calls upon* all the parties concerned, the co-sponsors of the peace process and the entire community to exert all the necessary efforts to ensure the resumption of the peace process and its success;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 9 December 1997
by 92 votes to 2,
with 65 abstentions

V. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS SEVEN RESOLUTIONS ON THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

On 10 December 1997, the General Assembly considered the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on agenda item 86, entitled "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East" (A/52/616). For the verbatim record of the plenary consideration of the item, see document A/52/PV.69; for a description of the report submitted under the item, see the October/November 1997 issue of this bulletin.

The seven resolutions adopted by the General Assembly under agenda item 86, on the recommendation of the Fourth Committee, are reproduced below with an indication of the vote, where appropriate. Voting details will be given in a document to be issued by the Division for Palestinian Rights with the symbol A/AC.183/L.2/Add.18.

52/57. Assistance to Palestine refugees

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 51/124 of 13 December 1996 and all its previous resolutions on the question, including resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948,

Taking note of the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East covering the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997,1/

Welcoming the signature in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993 by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the people of

1/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 13* and addendum (A/52/13 and Add.1).

Palestine, of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements 2/ and the subsequent implementation agreements, and also the signature of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,3/

Encouraging the Multilateral Working Group on Refugees of the Middle East peace process to continue its important work,

Welcoming the completion of the transfer of the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to Gaza, to its area of operations,

1. *Notes with regret* that repatriation or compensation of the refugees, as provided for in paragraph 11 of its resolution 194 (III), has not yet been effected and that, therefore, the situation of the refugees continues to be a matter of concern;

2. *Expresses its thanks* to the Commissioner-General and to all the staff of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, recognizing that the Agency is doing all it can within the limits of available resources, and also expresses its thanks to the specialized agencies and to private organizations for their valuable work in assisting refugees;

3. *Notes with regret* that the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine has been unable to find a means of achieving progress in the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), and requests the Commission to exert continued efforts towards the implementation of that paragraph and to report to the Assembly as appropriate, but no later than 1 September 1998;

4. *Notes* the significant success of the Peace Implementation Programme of the Agency since the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements,2/ and stresses the importance that contributions to this Programme are not at the expense of the General Fund;

5. *Welcomes* strengthened cooperation between the Agency and the World Bank and other specialized agencies, and calls upon the Agency to make a decisive contribution towards giving a fresh impetus to the economic and social stability of the occupied territories;

6. *Urges* all Member States to extend and expedite aid and assistance with a view to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people and the occupied territories;

7. *Reiterates its deep concern* regarding the persisting critical financial situation of the Agency, as outlined in the report of the Commissioner-General;1/

8. *Commends* the efforts of the Commissioner-General to move towards budgetary transparency and internal efficiency, and hopes that such moves will continue;

9. *Notes with profound concern* that the structural deficit problem confronting the Agency portends an almost certain decline in the living conditions of the Palestine refugees and that it, therefore, has possible consequences for the peace process;

10. *Calls upon* all Governments, as a matter of urgency, to make the most generous efforts

---

2/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

3/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

possible to meet the anticipated needs of the Agency, urges non-contributing Governments to contribute regularly and encourages contributing Governments to consider increasing their regular contributions.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 159 votes to 1,
with 2 abstentions

52/58. Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2656 (XXV) of 7 December 1970, 2728 (XXV) of 15 December 1970, 2791 (XXVI) of 6 December 1971, 51/125 of 13 December 1996 and the previous resolutions on this question,

Recalling also its decision 36/462 of 16 March 1982, by which it took note of the special report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,1/

Having considered the report of the Working Group,2/

Taking into account the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997,3/

Deeply concerned about the persisting critical financial situation of the Agency, which has affected and affects the continuation of the provision of the necessary Agency services to Palestine refugees, including the emergency-related programmes,

Emphasizing the continuing need for extraordinary efforts in order to maintain, at least at the current minimum level, the activities of the Agency, as well as to enable the Agency to carry out essential construction,

1. *Commends* the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for its efforts to assist in ensuring the financial security of the Agency;

2. *Takes note with approval* of the report of the Working Group;2/

3. *Requests* the Working Group to continue its efforts, in cooperation with the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General, for the financing of the Agency for a further period of one year;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the necessary services and assistance to the Working Group for the conduct of its work.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
without a vote

52/59. Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967 and 2341 B (XXII) of 19 December 1967 and all subsequent related resolutions,

---

1/ A/36/866 and Corr.1; see also A/37/591.

2/ A/52/578.

3/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 13* and addendum (A/52/13 and Add.1).

Recalling also Security Council resolutions 237 (1967) of 14 June 1967 and 259 (1968) of 27 September 1968,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General submitted in pursuance of its resolution 51/126 of 13 December 1996,1/

Taking note also of the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997,2/

Concerned about the continuing human suffering resulting from the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities,

Taking note of the relevant provisions of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, signed in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993 by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization,3/ with regard to the modalities for the admission of persons displaced in 1967, and concerned that the process agreed upon has not yet been effected,

1. *Reaffirms* the right of all persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities to return to their homes or former places of residence in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967;

2. *Expresses the hope* for an accelerated return of displaced persons through the mechanism agreed upon by the parties in article XII of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements;3/

3. *Endorses*, in the meanwhile, the efforts of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to continue to provide humanitarian assistance, as far as practicable, on an emergency basis, and as a temporary measure, to persons in the area who are currently displaced and in serious need of continued assistance as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities;

4. *Strongly appeals* to all Governments and to organizations and individuals to contribute generously to the Agency and to the other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned for the above purposes;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, after consulting with the Commissioner-General, to report to the General Assembly before its fifty-third session on the progress made with regard to the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 159 votes to 2,
with 1 abstention

1/ A/52/423.

2/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 13* and addendum (A/52/13 and Add.1).

3/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

52/60. Offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for Palestine refugees

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 212 (III) of 19 November 1948 on assistance to Palestine refugees,

Recalling also its resolutions 35/13 B of 3 November 1980, 36/146 H of 16 December 1981, 37/120 D of 16 December 1982, 38/83 D of 15 December 1983, 39/99 D of 14 December 1984, 40/165 D of 16 December 1985, 41/69 D of 3 December 1986, 42/69 D of 2 December 1987, 43/57 D of 6 December 1988, 44/47 D of 8 December 1989, 45/73 D of 11 December 1990, 46/46 D of 9 December 1991, 47/69 D of 14 December 1992, 48/40 D of 10 December 1993, 49/35 D of 9 December 1994, 50/28 D of 6 December 1995 and 51/127 of 13 December 1996,

Cognizant of the fact that the Palestine refugees have, for the last five decades, lost their homes, lands and means of livelihood,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,1/

Having also considered the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997,2/

1. *Urges* all States to respond to the appeal in its resolution 32/90 F of 13 December 1977 and reiterated in subsequent relevant resolutions in a manner commensurate with the needs of Palestine refugees for higher education, including vocational training;

2. *Strongly appeals* to all States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to augment the special allocations for grants and scholarships to Palestine refugees, in addition to their contributions to the regular budget of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;

3. *Expresses its appreciation* to all Governments, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations that responded favourably to its resolutions on this question;

4. *Invites* the relevant specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to continue, within their respective spheres of competence, to extend assistance for higher education to Palestine refugee students;

5. *Appeals* to all States, specialized agencies and the United Nations University to contribute generously to the Palestinian universities in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, including, in due course, the proposed University of Jerusalem "Al-Quds" for Palestine refugees;

6. *Appeals* to all States, specialized agencies and other international bodies to contribute towards the establishment of vocational training centres for Palestine refugees;

7. *Requests* the Agency to act as the recipient and trustee for the special allocations for grants and scholarships and to award them to qualified Palestine refugee candidates;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 163 votes,
with 1 abstention

1/ A/52/415.

2/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 13* and addendum (A/52/13 and Add.1).

52/61. Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, 212 (III) of 19 November 1948, 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 and all subsequent related resolutions,

Recalling also the relevant Security Council resolutions,

Having considered the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997,1/

Taking note of the letter dated 14 October 1997 from the Chairman of the Advisory Commission of the Agency addressed to the Commissioner-General, contained in the report of the Commissioner-General,2/

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General submitted in pursuance of its resolutions 48/40 E,3/ 48/40 H 4/ and 48/40 J 5/ of 10 December 1993 and 49/35 C of 9 December 1994,6/

Recalling Articles 100, 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations,7/

Affirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,8/ to the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem,

Aware of the fact that Palestine refugees have, for five decades, lost their homes, lands and means of livelihood,

Also aware of the continuing needs of Palestine refugees throughout the occupied Palestinian territory and in the other fields of operation, namely, in Lebanon, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic,

Further aware of the valuable work done by the refugee affairs officers of the Agency in providing protection to the Palestinian people, in particular Palestine refugees,

Deeply concerned about the critical financial situation of the Agency and its effect on the continuity of provision of necessary Agency services to the Palestine refugees, including the emergency-related programmes,

Aware of the work of the new Peace Implementation Programme of the Agency,

Recalling the signing in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993 of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization,9/ and the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank

---

1/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 13* and addendum (A/52/13 and Add.1).

2/ Ibid., p. vii.

3/ A/49/440.

4/ A/49/442.

5/ A/49/443.

6/ A/50/451.

7/ Resolution 22 A (I).

8/ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

9/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

and the Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,10/

Taking note of the agreement reached on 24 June 1994, embodied in an exchange of letters between the Agency and the Palestine Liberation Organization,11/

Aware of the establishment of a working relationship between the Advisory Commission of the Agency and the Palestine Liberation Organization in accordance with General Assembly decision 48/417 of 10 December 1993,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, as well as to all the staff of the Agency, for their tireless efforts and valuable work;

2. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Advisory Commission of the Agency, and requests it to continue its efforts and to keep the General Assembly informed of its activities, including the full implementation of decision 48/417;

3. *Welcomes* the completion of the transfer of the headquarters of the Agency to Gaza and the signing of the Headquarters Agreement between the Agency and the Palestinian Authority;

4. *Acknowledges* the support of the host Government and the Palestine Liberation Organization for the Agency in the discharge of its duties;

5. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to accept the *de jure* applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,8/ and to abide scrupulously by its provisions;

6. *Also calls upon* Israel to abide by Articles 100, 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations 7/ with regard to the safety of the personnel of the Agency and the protection of its institutions and the safeguarding of the security of the facilities of the Agency in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem;

7. *Calls once again upon* the Government of Israel to compensate the Agency for damages to its property and facilities resulting from actions by the Israeli side;

8. *Requests* the Commissioner-General to proceed with the issuance of identification cards for Palestine refugees and their descendants in the occupied Palestinian territory;

9. *Notes* that the new context created by the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization 9/ and subsequent implementation agreements has had major consequences for the activities of the Agency, which is henceforth called upon, in close cooperation with the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, the specialized agencies and the World Bank, to continue to contribute towards the development of economic and social stability in the occupied territory;

10. *Notes also* that the functioning of the Agency remains essential in all fields of operation;

11. *Notes further* the significant success of the Peace Implementation Programme of the Agency;

12. *Expresses concern* over those remaining austerity measures due to the financial crisis which

---

10/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

11/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 13* (A/49/13), annex I.

have affected the quality and level of some of the services of the Agency;

13. *Requests* the Commissioner-General to consider the possibility of modernizing the archives of the Agency;

14. *Urges* all States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to continue and to increase their contributions to the Agency so as to ease current financial constraints and to support the Agency in maintaining the provision of the most basic and effective assistance to the Palestine refugees.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 158 votes to 2,
with 3 abstentions

52/62. Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, 36/146 C of 16 December 1981 and all its subsequent resolutions on the question,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General submitted in pursuance of its resolution 51/129 of 13 December 1996,1/

Taking note also of the report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine for the period from 1 September 1996 to 31 August 1997,2/

Recalling that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 3/ and the principles of international law uphold the principle that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his or her property,

Recalling in particular its resolution 394 (V) of 14 December 1950, in which it directed the Conciliation Commission, in consultation with the parties concerned, to prescribe measures for the protection of the rights, property and interests of the Palestine Arab refugees,

Taking note of the completion of the programme of identification and evaluation of Arab property, as announced by the Conciliation Commission in its twenty-second progress report,4/ and of the fact that the Land Office had a schedule of Arab owners and file of documents defining the location, area and other particulars of Arab property,

Recalling that in the framework of the Middle East peace process the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Government of Israel agreed, in the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 13 September 1993,5/ to commence negotiations on permanent status issues, including the important issue of the refugees, and calling for the commencement of those negotiations,

1. *Reaffirms* that the Palestine Arab refugees are entitled to their property and to the income derived therefrom, in conformity with the principles of justice and equity;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take all appropriate steps, in consultation with the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, for the protection of Arab property, assets and property rights in Israel and to preserve and modernize the existing records;

1/ A/52/372.

2/ A/52/311, annex.

3/ Resolution 217 A (III).

4/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Nineteenth Session, Annexes*, Annex No. 11, document A/5700.

5/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

3. *Calls once more upon* Israel to render all facilities and assistance to the Secretary-General in the implementation of the present resolution;

4. *Calls upon* all the parties concerned to provide the Secretary-General with any pertinent information in their possession concerning Arab property, assets and property rights in Israel that would assist him in the implementation of the present resolution;

5. *Urges* the Palestinian and Israeli sides, as agreed between them, to deal with the important issue of Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues in the framework of the final status negotiations of the Middle East peace process;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 158 votes to 2,
with 3 abstentions

52/63. University of Jerusalem "Al Quds" for Palestine refugees

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 36/146 G of 16 December 1981, 37/120 C of 16 December 1982, 38/83 K of 15 December 1983, 39/99 K of 14 December 1984, 40/165 D and K of 16 December 1985, 41/69 K of 3 December 1986, 42/69 K of 2 December 1987, 43/57 J of 6 December 1988, 44/47 J of 8 December 1989, 45/73 J of 11 December 1990, 46/46 J of 9 December 1991, 47/69 J of 14 December 1992, 48/40 I of 10 December 1993, 49/35 G of 9 December 1994, 50/28 G of 6 December 1995 and 51/130 of 13 December 1996,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,1/

Having also considered the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997,2/

1. *Emphasizes* the need for strengthening the educational system in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 5 June 1967, including Jerusalem, and specifically the need for the establishment of the proposed university;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary measures for establishing the University of Jerusalem "Al-Quds", in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/13 B of 3 November 1980, giving due consideration to the recommendations consistent with the provisions of that resolution;

3. *Calls once more upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cooperate in the implementation of the present resolution and to remove the hindrances that it has put in the way of establishing the University of Jerusalem "Al-Quds";

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 158 votes to 2,
with 3 abstentions

1/ A/52/503.

2/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 13* and addendum (A/52/13 and Add.1).

VI. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS FIVE RESOLUTIONS ON THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

On 10 December 1997, the General Assembly considered the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on agenda item 87, entitled "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories" (A/52/617). For the verbatim record of the plenary consideration of the item, see document A/52/PV.69; for a description of the reports submitted under this item, see the October/November 1997 issue of this bulletin.

The five resolutions adopted by the General Assembly under the item, on the recommendation of the Fourth Commitee, are reproduced below with an indication of the vote. Voting details will be given in a document to be issued by the Division for Palestinian Rights with the symbol A/AC.183/L.2/Add.18.

52/64. Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Guided also by the principles of international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,1/ as well as international standards of human rights, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 2/ and the International Covenants on Human Rights,3/

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including resolution 2443 (XXIII) of 19 December 1968, and relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling also relevant resolutions of the Security Council,

Aware of the lasting impact of the uprising (*intifada*) of the Palestinian people,

Convinced that occupation itself represents a primary violation of human rights,

Having considered the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories 4/ and the relevant reports of the Secretary-General,5/

Recalling the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993,6/ as well

---

1/ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

2/ Resolution 217 A (III).

3/ Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

4/ See A/52/131 and Add.1 and 2.

5/ A/52/550-553.

6/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

as the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,7/

Expressing the hope that, with the progress of the peace process, the Israeli occupation will be brought to an end and therefore violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people will cease,

1. *Commends* the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories for its efforts in performing the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly and for its impartiality;

2. *Demands* that Israel cooperate with the Special Committee in implementing its mandate;

3. *Deplores* those policies and practices of Israel which violate the human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories, as reflected in the reports of the Special Committee covering the reporting period;

4. *Expresses concern* about the recent deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, as a result of Israeli practices and measures and the impasse facing the Middle East peace process;

5. *Requests* the Special Committee, pending complete termination of the Israeli occupation, to continue to investigate Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, especially Israeli lack of compliance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,1/ and to consult, as appropriate, with the International Committee of the Red Cross according to its regulations in order to ensure that the welfare and human rights of the peoples of the occupied territories are safeguarded and to report to the Secretary-General as soon as possible and whenever the need arises thereafter;

6. *Also requests* the Special Committee to submit regularly to the Secretary-General periodic reports on the current situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem;

7. *Further requests* the Special Committee to continue to investigate the treatment of prisoners in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(*a*) To provide the Special Committee with all necessary facilities, including those required for its visits to the occupied territories, so that it may investigate the Israeli policies and practices referred to in the present resolution;

(*b*) To continue to make available such additional staff as may be necessary to assist the Special Committee in the performance of its tasks;

(*c*) To circulate regularly to Member States the periodic reports mentioned in paragraph 6 above;

(*d*) To ensure the widest circulation of the reports of the Special Committee and of information regarding its activities and findings, by all means available, through the Office of Communications and Public Information of the Secretariat and, where necessary, to reprint those reports of the Special Committee that are no longer available;

(*e*) To report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the tasks entrusted to him in the present resolution;

7/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

9. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories".

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 83 votes to 2,
with 72 abstentions

52/65. Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the other occupied Arab territories

The General Assembly,

Recalling its relevant resolutions,

Bearing in mind the relevant resolutions of the Security Council,

Having considered the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories 1/ and the relevant reports of the Secretary-General,2/

Considering that the promotion of respect for the obligations arising from the Charter of the United Nations and other instruments and rules of international law is among the basic purposes and principles of the United Nations,

Stressing that Israel, the occupying Power, should comply strictly with its obligations under international law,

1. *Reaffirms* that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,3/ is applicable to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967;

2. *Demands* that Israel accept the *de jure* applicability of the Convention in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, and that it comply scrupulously with the provisions of the Convention;

3. *Calls upon* all States parties to the Convention, in accordance with article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions,4/ to exert all efforts in order to ensure respect for its provisions by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 156 votes to 2,
with 3 abstentions

52/66. Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan

The General Assembly,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force,

---

1/ See A/52/131 and Add.1 and 2.

2/ A/52/550-553.

3/ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

4/ Ibid., Nos. 970-973.

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including those adopted at its tenth emergency special session, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,1/ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and to the occupied Syrian Golan,

Aware of the Middle East peace process started at Madrid and the agreements reached between the parties, in particular the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 13 September 1993 2/ and the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip of 28 September 1995,3/

Expressing grave concern about the decision of the Government of Israel to resume settlement activities, including the construction of the new settlement in Jabal Abu Ghneim, in violation of international humanitarian law, relevant United Nations resolutions and the agreements reached between the parties,

Gravely concerned in particular about the dangerous situation resulting from actions taken by the illegal armed Israeli settlers in the occupied territory, as illustrated by the massacre of Palestinian worshippers by an illegal Israeli settler in Al-Khalil on 25 February 1994,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,4/

1. *Reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal and an obstacle to peace and economic and social development;

2. *Calls upon* Israel to accept the *de jure* applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,1/ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and to the occupied Syrian Golan and to abide scrupulously by the provisions of the Convention, in particular article 49;

3. *Demands* complete cessation of the construction of the new settlement in Jabal Abu Ghneim and of all Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan;

4. *Stresses* the need for full implementation of Security Council resolution 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994, in which, among other things, the Council called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to continue to take and implement measures, including, *inter alia*, confiscation of arms, with the aim of preventing illegal acts of violence by Israeli settlers, and called for measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians in the occupied territory.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 149 votes to 2,
with 7 abstentions

1/ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

2/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

3/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

4/ A/51/517.

52/67. Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

The General Assembly,

Recalling its relevant resolutions, including those adopted at its tenth emergency special session, and the resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights,

Bearing in mind the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, the most recent of which are resolutions 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994 and 1073 (1996) of 28 September 1996,

Having considered the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories 1/ and the reports of the Secretary-General,2/

Aware of the responsibility of the international community to promote human rights and ensure respect for international law,

Reaffirming the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force,

Reaffirming also the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,3/ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements by the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993,4/ as well as the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip signed in Washington, D.C., on 28 September 1995,5/

Noting the withdrawal of the Israeli army, which took place in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area in accordance with the agreements reached between the parties, and the initiation of the Palestinian Authority in those areas,

Noting also the redeployment of the Israeli army from six cities in the West Bank,

Concerned about the continuing violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people by Israel, the occupying Power, especially the use of collective punishment, closure of areas, annexation and establishment of settlements and the continuing actions by it designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem,

Expressing its deep concern in particular about the closure by the Israeli authorities of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, which prevents the freedom of movement of persons and goods and is the cause of great economic and social hardship, in violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and the agreements reached between the two sides,

---

1/ See A/52/131 and Add.1 and 2.

2/ A/52/550-553.

3/ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

4/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

5/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

Convinced of the positive impact of a temporary international or foreign presence in the occupied Palestinian territory on the safety and protection of the Palestinian people,

Expressing its appreciation to the countries that participated in the Temporary International Presence in Hebron for their positive contribution,

Convinced of the need for the full implementation of Security Council resolutions 904 (1994) and 1073 (1996),

1. *Determines* that all measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, in violation of the relevant provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,3/ and contrary to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, are illegal and have no validity and that such measures should cease immediately;

2. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, cease all practices and actions that violate the human rights of the Palestinian people;

3. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the occupied Palestinian territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods within the Palestinian territory, including the removal of restrictions on movement into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

4. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to accelerate the release of all remaining Palestinians arbitrarily detained or imprisoned, in line with agreements reached;

5. *Calls* for complete respect by Israel, the occupying Power, of all fundamental freedoms of the Palestinian people, pending the extension of the self-government arrangements to the rest of the occupied territory;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 151 votes to 2,
with 7 abstentions

52/68. The occupied Syrian Golan

The General Assembly,

Having considered the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories,1/

Deeply concerned that the Syrian Golan occupied since 1967 has been under continued Israeli military occupation,

Recalling Security Council resolution 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling also its previous relevant resolutions, the last of which was resolution 51/135 of 13 December 1996,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General submitted in pursuance of resolution 51/135,2/

Recalling its previous relevant resolutions in which, *inter alia*, it called upon Israel to put an end to its occupation of the Arab territories,

Reaffirming once more the illegality of the decision of 14 December 1981 taken by Israel to

---

1/ See A/52/131 and Add.1 and 2.

2/ A/52/550.

impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan, which has resulted in the effective annexation of that territory,

Reaffirming that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible under international law, including the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming also the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,3/ to the occupied Syrian Golan,

Bearing in mind Security Council resolution 237 (1967) of 14 June 1967,

Welcoming the convening at Madrid of the Peace Conference on the Middle East on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 aimed at the realization of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, and expressing grave concern about the stalling of the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks,

1. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to comply with the relevant resolutions on the occupied Syrian Golan, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council, *inter alia*, decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and without international legal effect, and demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, should rescind forthwith its decision;

2. *Also calls upon* Israel to desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan and in particular to desist from the establishment of settlements;

3. *Determines* that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken or to be taken by Israel, the occupying Power, that purport to alter the character and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan are null and void, constitute a flagrant violation of international law and of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,3/ and have no legal effect;

4. *Calls upon* Israel to desist from imposing Israeli citizenship and Israeli identity cards on the Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to desist from its repressive measures against the population of the occupied Syrian Golan;

5. *Deplores* the violations by Israel of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;

6. *Calls once again upon* Member States not to recognize any of the legislative or administrative measures and actions referred to above;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Adopted on 10 December 1997
by 152 votes to 1,
with 7 abstentions

3/ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

VII. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON ASSISTANCE TO PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

The General Assembly considered the question of assistance to the Palestinian People under agenda item 20 (d), entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: assistance to the Palestinian people", on 24 November and 16 December 1997. For the verbatim records of the plenary consideration of the item, see documents A/52/PV.52 and 73.

The Secretary-General issued under the item a report on assistance to the Palestinian People (A/52/159-E/1997/69). The final report of the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, held at Amman from 20 to 22 May 1997 under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, was also circulated under this item (A/52/79-E/1997/76).

On 16 December 1997, the General Assembly adopted under the item a resolution entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian People" without a vote. The text of the resolution is reproduced below:

52/170. Assistance to the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 51/150 of 13 December 1996,

Recalling also previous resolutions on the question,

Welcoming the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 1993 between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,1/ as well as the signing of the subsequent implementation agreements, including the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip of 1995,2/

Gravely concerned about the difficult economic and employment conditions facing the Palestinian people throughout the occupied territory,

Conscious of the urgent need for improvement in the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied territory and the living conditions of the Palestinian people,

Aware that development is difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

Noting, in the light of recent developments in the peace process, the great economic and social challenges facing the Palestinian people and their leadership,

Conscious of the urgent necessity for international assistance to the Palestinian people, taking into account the Palestinian priorities,

Noting the convening of the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, "Palestinian Human Development Needs",3/ held at Amman from 20 to 22 May 1997,

---

1/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

2/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

3/ A/52/179-E/1997/76.

Stressing the need for the full engagement of the United Nations in the process of building Palestinian institutions and in providing broad assistance to the Palestinian people, including assistance in the fields of elections, police training and public administration,

Noting the appointment by the Secretary-General in June 1994 of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories,

Welcoming the results of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, convened in Washington, D.C., on 1 October 1993, and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the work being done by the World Bank as its secretariat, as well as the establishment of the consultative group,

Welcoming also the establishment by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee of the Joint Liaison Committee, which provides a forum in which economic policy and practical matters related to donor assistance are discussed with the Palestinian Authority,

Welcoming further the meeting of the consultative group in Paris on 19 and 20 November 1996, at which the proposed programme of United Nations assistance for 1997 was presented to the donor community,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,4/

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;4/

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his rapid response and efforts regarding assistance to the Palestinian people;

3. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people;

4. *Stresses* the importance of the work done by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and of the steps taken under the auspices of the Secretary-General to ensure the achievement of a coordinated mechanism for United Nations activities throughout the occupied territories;

5. *Urges* Member States, international financial institutions of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and regional and interregional organizations to extend, as rapidly and as generously as possible, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in order to assist in the development of the West Bank and Gaza, and to do so in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization and through official Palestinian institutions;

6. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance in response to the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in accordance with the Palestinian priorities set forth by the Palestinian Authority, with emphasis on national execution and capacity-building;

7. *Urges* Member States to open their markets to exports from the West Bank and Gaza and on the most favourable terms, consistent with appropriate trading rules;

8. *Calls upon* the international donor community to expedite the delivery of pledged assistance to the Palestinian people to meet their urgent needs;

4/ A/52/159-E/1997/69.

9. *Suggests* the convening in 1998 of a United Nations-sponsored seminar on the Palestinian economy;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution, containing:

(*a*) An assessment of the assistance actually received by the Palestinian people;

(*b*) An assessment of the needs still unmet and specific proposals for responding effectively to them;

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the sub-item entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

Adopted on 16 December 1997
without a vote

VIII. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION

On 12 December 1997, the General Assembly considered a report of the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (Third Committee) contained in document A/52/643, on agenda item 111, entitled "Right of peoples to self-determination," and adopted the resolution reproduced below. For the verbatim record of the Assembly's consideration, see document A/52/PV.70.

52/114. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination

The General Assembly,

Aware that the development of friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, is among the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as defined in the Charter,

Recalling the International Covenants on Human Rights,1/ the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,2/ the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples 3/ and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,4/

Recalling also the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,5/

Expressing deep concern over the deterioration of the Middle East peace process, including the lack of implementation of the agreements signed between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Government of Israel,

Affirming the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders,

---

1/ Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
2/ Resolution 217 A (III).
3/ Resolution 1514 (XV).
4/ A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
5/ See resolution 50/6.

1. *Reaffirms* the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination;

2. *Expresses the hope* that the Palestinian people will soon be exercising their right to self-determination in the current peace process;

3. *Urges* all States and the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to continue to support and assist the Palestinian people in their quest for self-determination.

Adopted on 12 December 1997
by 160 votes to 2,
with 6 abstentions

IX. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE OVER THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES

On 18 December 1997, upon the recommendation of the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee) (A/52/632), the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, under agenda item 12, entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council". For the verbatim record of the plenary consideration of the meeting, see document A/52/PV.77. The resolution is reproduced below.

52/207. Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 51/190 of 16 December 1996 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/67 of 25 July 1997,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,1/ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Expressing its concern at the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of the natural resources of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Aware of the additional, detrimental economic and social impact of the Israeli settlements on Palestinian and other Arab natural resources, especially the confiscation of land and the forced diversion of water resources,

Expressing its concern at the difficulties facing the Middle East peace process which started

1/ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

at Madrid on 30 October 1991 and which is based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978 and the principle of land for peace, as well as concern over the lack of implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, signed in Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993,2/ and the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, of 28 September 1995,3/

1. *Takes note* of the report transmitted by the Secretary-General;4/

2. *Reaffirms* the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water;

3. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, to cause loss or depletion of or to endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan;

4. *Recognizes* the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, loss or depletion of, or danger to, their natural resources, and expresses the hope that this issue will be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiation between the Palestinian and Israeli sides;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include in the agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources".

Adopted on 18 December 1997
by 137 votes to 2,
with 14 abstentions

2/ A/48/486-S/26560, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1993*, document S/26560.

3/ A/51/889-S/1997/357, annex; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-second Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1997*, document S/1997/357.

4/ A/52/172-E/1997/71 and Corr. 1, annex.

X. ABOUT $126 MILLION PLEDGED FOR UNRWA'S 1998 PROGRAMMES IN SUPPORT OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

The following is an excerpt from a press release issued by UNRWA on 2 December 1997 (GA/9367-PAL/1849):

Pledges totalling $125,677,700 were announced this morning for the 1998 programmes of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which provides educational services, food aid, medical services, relief and social services to the Palestinian people. That amount is less than 40 per cent of what UNRWA will need to maintain its regular education, health, relief and social services programmes in 1998.

At a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the Announcement of Voluntary Contributions to UNRWA, announcements of pledges were made by 23 countries. The largest pledges were made by the

United States ($70 million), Sweden ($19 million), Norway ($14.2 million) and the Netherlands and Switzerland ($5.5 million each).

Also making pledges were Austria, Belgium, China, Chile, Cyprus, Germany, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. Countries announcing their intention to pledge at a later date were Canada, Denmark, France, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Written pledges were submitted by the Czech Republic and Egypt.

The General Assembly President, Hennadiy Udovenko (Ukraine), said that the austerity measures that the UNRWA management had been forced to impose over the past four years had begun seriously to affect the level and quality of the Agency's services. Its schools, health centres and other installations - some of them 25 or 30 years old - were critically in need of repair. It was not enough merely to salute the work of UNRWA without giving its staff the necessary resources and tools to carry out the work entrusted to them, he stressed.

The Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Peter Hansen, said if UNRWA received the same amount for its General Fund in 1998 as it had in 1997, it would still face a deficit of over $50 million. The UNRWA had prepared a needs-based budget, linking programme outputs to funding required. For decades, the international community had financed services to refugees at a certain level. It was important to maintain those levels, so that the Palestine refugee communities, which had maintained their identity and educated their children and instilled in them a sense of survival and enterprise, would be enabled to continue doing so until there was a resolution to their problem.

In closing remarks, Mr. Hansen emphasized that the prospects for peace in the Middle East would be dim if the Palestinians could not maintain hope for the future.

Also addressing the meeting, the observer for Palestine thanked the donor Governments, saying that their contributions were of even greater importance in view of the difficult financial situation facing UNRWA and the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian refugees. The representative of Lebanon also made a statement.

The UNRWA is one of many United Nations activities which is financed mainly by voluntary contributions outside the regular budget. The Agency was created by General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) on 8 December 1949 and began operations on 1 May 1950. It initially provided emergency relief to some 750,000 Palestinian refugees who had lost their homes and livelihood as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Agency's five fields of operation are in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

XI. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY REAFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN DEVELOPMENT

The following is a press release issued by the World Bank on 15 December 1997:

Paris, 15 December 1997 - At the conclusion of two days of intensive discussions, the international donor community reaffirmed its support for Palestinian development by indicating its intention to commit close to US$750 million in grants, loans and equity towards development activities in the West Bank and Gaza in 1998 and a further $150 million in guarantees for private investment. Donors estimate that the above-mentioned commitments will translate into between $500 million and $600 million in disbursements in 1998. Donors also indicated that there would be

continued support to Palestinian development beyond the current five-year pledging period which ends in 1998.

The commitments made at today's meeting would come on top of $3 billion in commitments made since the signing of the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993. More than $1.8 billion of this assistance has already been disbursed to the Palestinians since 1993 for infrastructure rehabilitation, technical assistance and other kinds of development and emergency expenditures.

The meeting of 31 countries and 11 international organizations of the Consultative Group for the West Bank and Gaza was convened by the World Bank to review implementation of ongoing projects, discuss policy issues and to consider a three-year development plan prepared by the Palestinian Authority. According to Nabil Sha'ath, Palestinian Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, this programme "is a menu of projects" for which the Palestinian Authority is seeking donor funding. In setting out its three-year programme (1998-2000), the Palestinian Authority noted that the programme follows a strategy of encouraging private sector investment in the West Bank and Gaza and of focusing direct government intervention on relieving conditions for the poor, particularly in rural areas, and on providing investment in infrastructure and human resource development where these investments could not be provided efficiently by the private sector.

The meeting took place against a backdrop of disappointing economic outcomes over the past few years as analysed in a draft report by the World Bank and the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute. This analysis shows a dramatic decline in private sector investment in the West Bank and Gaza and a steep fall in the living standard of Palestinians since the start of the peace process. This deterioration, according to the report provided to the donors, is a result of both external impediments - consisting primarily of the restrictions imposed on the movement of goods and people between and within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and limitations on Palestinian use of natural resources (including water and land) and access to markets outside of Israel - and on internal impediments such as insufficient and deteriorated infrastructure, and a still insufficient regulatory framework and institutional capacity in the Palestinian areas.

The donor community, expressing deep concern about the problems affecting the Palestinian economy nearly five years into the peace process, called on the Government of Israel to help improve the economic situation by ensuring the free movement of people and goods, including direct access to Egypt and Jordan and to the opening of the Gaza airport and port. The donors also indicated that they expected the Palestinian Authority to re-double their efforts to improve the regulatory framework and to ensure a transparent and efficient fiscal process, including the consolidation of all fiscal accounts under the control of the Ministry of Finance. Donors noted, as well, the importance that Palestinian civil society and the role that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) played in equitable economic development.

In this regard, donors welcomed the statement by the Israeli delegation at the meeting that committed Israel to support the Palestinian development process, including new efforts to facilitate uninterrupted access of Palestinian workers to the Israeli labour market, and to permit unimpeded movement of goods and labour to and from designated industrial estates in the West Bank and Gaza. The meeting also noted the statement by Mr. Mohammed Nashashibi, Palestinian Minister of Finance, that the Palestinian Authority was committed to promoting good governance in the West Bank and Gaza and was looking to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, in particular, to assist them in their efforts.

The meeting also concentrated on the steps necessary to attract the private sector, both domestic and foreign, to invest in the West Bank and Gaza. Private sector investment, which was expected to

provide the engine for economic expansion, is estimated to have declined by 75 per cent since 1992. The International Finance Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group, announced an initiative to launch, together with the Peres Institute, a $200 million dollar venture capital fund to promote joint ventures in the West Bank and Gaza. In summarizing the sentiments of the delegates, the Chairman, Kemal Dervis, Vice-President of the Middle East and Northern Africa region of the World Bank, said:

> "Even under such difficult circumstances, there is much that we as donors can do to help build a predictable environment for private investment. If the basics are in place and if there is greater political stability, I see significant investment potential."

He also conveyed the assurance of continued commitment and the best wishes of President James D. Wolfensohn to the Palestinian delegation and donor representatives.

The Palestinian Authority delegation was headed by Nabil Sha'ath, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation and Mohammed Nashashibi, Minister of Finance. The Consultative Group included representatives of 31 donor countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Luxembourg, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States; and 11 international organizations, including the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the European Union, International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Monetary Fund, the Islamic Development Bank, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries Fund for International Development, the Organization for European Cooperation and Development, and the United Nations. The meeting was chaired by the World Bank Group.

Contact in Paris: Raymond Toy: - (33 1) 40 69 30 28. Contact in the West Bank: Ma'moon Sbeih - (972)-2-574-6500. Contact in Washington: Jeannie Yamine (1) 202 473 23 18.